

REMARKS

The Official Action dated August 30, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In view thereof, claims 2-9 and 13 have been canceled in their entirety without prejudice nor disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein while claims 1 and 12 have been amended in order to better define that which Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, 1 and 10-12 are presently pending in the instant application.

With reference now to the Official Action and particularly page 2 thereof, claim 12 has been objected to as including minor informalities. Particularly, the Examiner states that in claim 12, before each step, an "a" should be inserted. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, independent claim 12 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 12 is now in proper formal condition for allowance.

With reference to paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Office Action, Applicants hereby acknowledge the election of Species I wherein the Examiner indicates that claims 1-5, 10, 11 and 12 are readable thereon. In this regard, claims 1 and 10-12 remain pending in the present application. With respect to claims 6-9 withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner as being directed to a non-elected species, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, each of these claims have been canceled. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' claimed invention is now proper condition for allowance.

With reference now to paragraph 5 of the Office Action, the drawings have been objected to in that the Examiner notes in Fig. 3, the depiction of arm 26 is confusing. In this regard, filed concurrently herewith is a Submission of Replacement Drawings wherein a replacement sheet including Fig. 3 has been submitted. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the replacement sheet be fully considered by the Examiner and approved.

With reference to page 5 of the Office Action, Applicants hereby acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 12 is allowable over the prior art of record pending correction of the minor informality noted above and that claim 4 has been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of previous dependent claim 4 thereby rewriting claim 4 in independent form. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 12 are now in proper condition for allowance.

With reference to paragraph 8 of the Office Action, claims 1-3, 5, 10 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,863,188 issued to Killian in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0002764 to Pflugner et al. or U.S. Patent No. 5,467,971 issued to Hurtubise et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed in that the combination proposed by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests that which is presently set forth by Applicants' claimed invention.

As noted hereinabove, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of previous dependent claim 4 which has been indicated as being allowable by the Examiner over the prior art of record. Accordingly, with such amendments further discussion with respect to the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is no longer believed to be warranted.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the objections and rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 1 and 10-12 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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